

Fish and Wildlife

Management Intent

The intent of this plan is:

- ° to maintain or improve the existing production and quality of fisheries habitat in the Fish Creek system and in the other creek systems in the study area; and
- ° to provide public access to Fish Creek, Homestead Creek, the unnamed creek at the north end of Flathorn Lake and their tributaries in addition to Class I and II wetlands for public hunting and fishing opportunities.

Classification/Reservation

- ° Class I and II wetlands on state land that are to be retained in state ownership shall be classified as Wildlife Habitat/Water Resources Lands. Retention in state ownership will significantly assist in protection of these important habitat areas, and will preserve public access to them. See wetlands guidelines 1 and 3, page 61.
- ° Most wetland areas and associated buffers on borough land will be retained in public ownership. See wetlands guidelines 1, 2, and 3, (page 61) for exceptions.
- ° Fish Creek, Homestead Creek, the unnamed creek at the north end of Flathorn Lake, their tributaries and associated buffers on state land (as shown on the Master Plan), will be classified as Wildlife Habitat/Public Recreation Lands. These creeks, their tributaries, and associated buffers on borough land (as shown on the Master Plan) will be retained in public ownership. Retention of these stream corridors in public ownership will preserve public access to these areas and remove them from possible over-development of surface resources that might negatively impact the habitat, wildlife populations, and existing and potential public use.
- ° The state-owned lands in Sections 1 and 11 of Township 17 North, Range 5 West, Seward Meridian will remain classified as Wildlife Habitat/Public Recreation Lands.

Planned Actions

The Department of Fish and Game will further investigate the potential for a fisheries enhancement program for Fish Creek and its tributaries.

Overland public access will be provided to Flathorn Lake as shown on the Master Plan Map. Additionally, trail corridors to Cow and Redshirt lakes will be retained in public ownership.

Management Guidelines

1. Vegetative manipulation along publicly-owned lakeshores will be carried out only after consultation with the Department of Fish and Game.
2. Road crossings of streams will be minimized.
3. Section line access will not be vacated unless adequate alternate public access is provided. This will maintain public access to important hunting and fishing areas. See guideline 11, Agriculture Section, page 53.
4. Ground water or surface water appropriations may not reduce the surface water resources below the amounts needed for the maintenance of fish and wildlife resources and water-related recreation.
5. Public access will be maintained to and within the Iditarod Historic Trail corridor. As Fish Creek agricultural lands are developed, this corridor will become increasingly important as a wildlife area since it will remain in a natural condition. It will also provide public access to other fish and wildlife habitat areas.
6. The Department of Fish and Game will monitor the use of Fish Creek and its waters and take appropriate action to keep its use within the carrying capacity of the stream.